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Programme 13. International drug control

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13.1 The international community has given a key role to the United Nations in the fight against illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse, both of which have proliferated in the wake of the globalization of trade, travel and communications. Concerted international action is anchored in the consensus of the international community embodied in the drug control conventions: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its Protocol of 1972, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

13.2 Under the drug control system, of which the conventions are an essential part, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs is the main intergovernmental policy-making body in drug control. It also acts as the governing body of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, which is responsible for the implementation of the Programme. The International Narcotics Control Board oversees compliance by Governments with their obligations under the conventions. The Programme supports the work of the Commission and the Board and assists Governments to enhance the impact of drug control efforts. The mandate of the Programme is contained in the drug control conventions, the 1987 Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and resolutions of the Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, in particular Assembly resolution S-17/2 of 23 February 1990 by which it adopted the Global Programme of Action, and resolutions 45/179 of 21 December 1990 and 47/100 of 16 December 1992.

13.3 The development and maintenance of international norms and standards for drug control will be central to the work of the Organization in that field. As the main focus for concerted international action against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme will monitor, promote and coordinate drug control efforts. It will ensure harmonized action by United Nations agencies and programmes, promote cooperation with other concerned international organizations and facilitate dialogue and cooperation among Governments at the subregional, regional and global levels. Priorities include establishment of information networks and gathering, analysing and disseminating information and knowledge to support development of international drug control policy and to identify and promote the use of proven drug control measures.

13.4 Drawing from the Fund of the Programme, technical advice and assistance will be provided to Governments in support of a balanced approach to drug abuse control targeting both illicit supply and demand. Support will concentrate on development of national and regional capacity to elaborate effective drug control policies and plans and on strengthening institutions responsible for implementing them.

13.5 These efforts are expected to result in greater consensus among States on strategies to fight drug abuse and trafficking at the global, regional and subregional levels, as well as in wider accession to and improved implementation of the drug control conventions. Networks to share information and knowledge on drug abuse and proven intervention methodologies will be established, and Governments will be provided better information on trends and effective drug

control strategies, techniques and countermeasures. The ability of Governments to tackle both illicit supply and demand will be reinforced.

Subprogramme 13.1 Coordination and promotion of international drug control

13.6 The objectives of this subprogramme, which is implemented by the Office of External Relations, Strategic Planning and Evaluation, are as follows:

(a) To ensure greater unity of purpose and coherence of action in drug control by the international community, including coordination, complementarity and non-duplication of drug control activities across the United Nations common system. To that end, the subprogramme will promote the implementation by Governments and by regional and international organizations active in drug control of the international drug control strategy embodied in the Global Programme of Action and the international drug control conventions. The Programme will provide leadership for the United Nations common system, in particular in the context of the updating and implementation of the System-Wide Action Plan, ensuring the inclusion of drug control concerns in the programmes of all concerned agencies and effective coordination at the field level;

(b) To have in place, in selected subregions, cooperation arrangements that embody a common understanding of and approach to drug control shared by the countries concerned. Needs and opportunities for multilateral cooperation in drug control at the subregional level will be identified and concrete cooperation arrangements promoted through advocacy and technical support. Joint assessments of existing subregional agreements with the Governments concerned will also be carried out and cooperation mechanisms and arrangements will be updated;

(c) To improve national capacities to coordinate drug control activities and to develop and implement comprehensive, balanced drug control policies and strategies. National drug control planning and coordination institutions will be established or strengthened, national drug control plans adopted and drug control concerns included in national development plans;

(d) To increase awareness among decision and opinion makers and the general public of the problem of drug abuse and its consequences. To that end, the subprogramme will focus in particular on the involvement of society and non-governmental organizations and promoting understanding of the multidimensional nature of the drug problem.

Subprogramme 13.2 International drug control monitoring and policy-making

13.7 The objectives of the subprogramme, which will be implemented by the Division for Treaty Implementation and Support Services, are as follows:

(a) To improve the quality of the analytical, organizational and administrative support to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, its subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental conferences dealing with international drug control so as to facilitate their effective functioning;

(b) To enable the International Narcotics Control Board to execute its responsibilities under the international drug control conventions and relevant resolutions of intergovernmental bodies, through the provision of effective and efficient substantive and technical services. These will include the provision of useful and reliable data, information and knowledge on the nature, patterns and trends in the licit supply of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors; identification and analyses of issues related to treaty compliance; maintenance of dialogue with Governments on its behalf; and wider dissemination of the Board's findings and annual reports;

(c) To establish, maintain and strengthen national and international controls over licit supplies of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors in a manner that ensures adequate availability for medical, scientific and other licit purposes while preventing diversion to illicit channels. The Board will be enabled to monitor compliance by Governments with the control measures established by the conventions or recommended by the Economic and Social Council. In particular, it will be enabled to monitor production, manufacture, international trade, distribution and use of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors; administer the system of estimates and assessments for national requirements of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; further develop technical aspects of the control system; and assess substances for possible control under the 1988 Convention thereby preventing diversion at the international level. Governments will be enabled to elaborate and implement effective policies and procedures to prevent diversion of drugs and precursors into illicit channels at the national level.

Subprogramme 13.3 Prevention and reduction of drug abuse, elimination of illicit crops and suppression of illicit drug trafficking

13.8 The objectives of the subprogramme, which is implemented by the Division for Operational Activities and Technical Services, are as follows:

(a) To ensure the availability to Governments of useful and reliable data, information and analyses on the nature of and patterns and trends in drug abuse cultivation of illicit crops and in illicit drug trafficking, including laundering of illicit proceeds, to enable them to formulate effective policies, strategies and countermeasures. To that end, networks to gather information will be established or improved, linking, as appropriate, Governments, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and other international and non-governmental organizations, among others; the information systems of Governments and the Programme will be further developed, ensuring compatibility with and maximizing access to various sources of data and information; quality and comparability of data and information on the national and international levels will be improved; harmonized data collection methodologies and data and information standards will be more widely used; and the International Drug Abuse Assessment System will be strengthened. Scientific and technical information on drugs and precursors will be made available to Governments as well as research on and analyses of patterns and trends in abuse, illicit cultivation, illicit drug trafficking and money laundering;

(b) To expand the information available to Governments, international organizations and experts on effective strategies, approaches, projects and

programmes to reduce illicit demand for drugs, to eliminate illicit crops and to suppress illicit drug trafficking, including laundering of illicit proceeds. To that end, the inventory of effective strategies, approaches, projects and programmes to reduce illicit demand and supply maintained by the Programme will be improved and expanded, and effective countermeasures tailored to local conditions against drug abuse, cultivation of illicit crops and drug trafficking will be developed. Furthermore, experimental and model programmes and projects that could be adapted to different circumstances will be elaborated, with a view to preventing drug abuse, to treating, rehabilitating and reintegrating drug abusers, eradicating illicit crops through alternative development and identifying and suppressing illicit drug trafficking, including laundering of illicit proceeds. Also, international cooperation to exchange information on effective countermeasures will be improved at the subregional, regional and global levels. The Programme's information base on national drug control legislation will be expanded and improved and collaboration among Governments in the legal field, including cooperation to suppress illicit traffic by sea, will be facilitated;

(c) To increase the effectiveness of national efforts to prevent and reduce drug abuse. To that end, Governments will be provided technical advice on effective integrated prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programmes together with the results of research on and assessments of the effectiveness of demand reduction modalities and techniques. Pilot and demonstration activities will be elaborated, implemented, monitored and evaluated;

(d) To increase the number and effectiveness of national illicit crop reduction programmes. To that end, the concerned national institutions in the countries most affected will be strengthened, enabling them to elaborate, implement, monitor and evaluate integrated national programmes designed to eliminate illicit crops through alternative development and other modalities. International support for these programmes will be marshalled, enlisting as necessary relevant partners, including the international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Networks will be established and periodic exchange of information on illicit crop reduction will take place at the subregional level;

(e) To increase the effectiveness of national action against illicit drug trafficking. To that end, in certain subregions, coordination of bilateral and multilateral technical assistance to combat illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors will be improved. Governments will be better able to adopt and implement drug control legislation in an effective manner; to prevent and detect illicit trafficking of precursors and drugs, in particular heroin, cocaine and stimulants, to apprehend international drug traffickers and to detect and prevent money-laundering. National drug analysis and pharmaceutical control laboratories will be strengthened and provided with required technical and scientific information. Collaboration among law enforcement training providers will be improved at the national and international levels.